

Prom '99 Preview:  
"An Evening of  
Elegance"

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Marc Setzer directs choral  
program to excellence

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South continues  
tradition of  
success with Art  
Scholastics



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# THE SABRES' BLADE

March 31, 1999

South Mecklenburg High School

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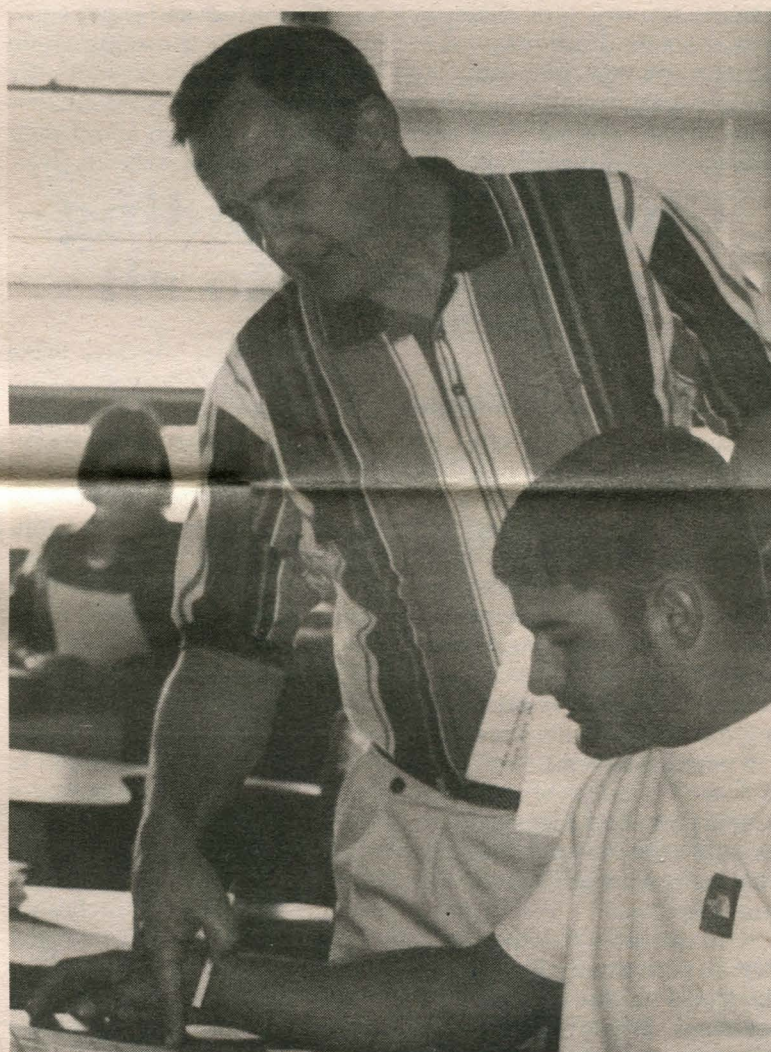
## DECA recognized as leader at state competition State conference to be the last for retiring DECA teacher

By Nicole Ewing  
Business Manager

South Meck DECA needed an additional U-Haul truck to carry back all of the awards that were won at the North Carolina Career Development Conference. Seventy-four students traveled to Greensboro, March 11-13 to compete in marketing events against over 2000 other students across the state. South was also recognized as the largest DECA chapter in North Carolina and the chapter with the largest percentage increase in membership for 1998-1999.

For Mr. Wayne Schultz, this year's competition was very special. He will be retiring at the end of the school year and has attended CDC for the past 30 years. "I always enjoy sharing this event with my students. At South Meck, we have students whose quality and character are outstanding," said Mr. Schultz. "I am proud to be a part of a successful organization like South Meck DECA."

Participants at CDC competed in marketing and business related written and role-play events and were judged based on their overall performance. Of the students from South, thirty-nine reached proficiency, sixteen were series finalists, and ten were either overall winners or runners-up. Among the state winners were Rachel Hockfield



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

Wayne Schultz has been working with DECA for 30 years.

and Laurel McKnight, who impressed judges with their team Advertising Campaign Project. Jason Edwards also won in the

Full Service Restaurant Management Event for the second year in a row. Jason is the 1998-99 DECA President and was very

happy with the result from competition. "This trip provided a great experience for all who participated. It was an exciting weekend in which South again carried on the tradition of excellence as we came home with an array of different awards," he said.

The Quiz Bowl team took second place in the Quiz Bowl Competition, losing only in the final round by one point. Allison Eargle's program cover design was chosen to be printed on all name tags and program covers.

Besides the trophies and medals, students also participated in marketing workshops, leadership opportunities, officer elections, and dances.

Fifteen of the winners will travel to Orlando, Florida to compete in the national DECA conference April 23-28. This group consists of: Michael Ballenger, Katherine Cooney, Adam Dawson, Andy Dizio, Jason Edwards, Nicole Ewing, Kelly Flaviani, Rachel Hockfield, Jimmy Kimball, Laurel McKnight, Melody Milroy, and Mrs. Starnes.

South has a history of sending a well-represented group to nationals. "This year will be no different," said DECA advisor Melanie Duncan. "We have a strong group of competitors and hope to bring home some national awards."

## Seniors partied like it was 1999 at Senior Follies

By Nicole Ewing  
Business Manager

The 1998-99 Senior class proved that they know how to "Party Like It's 1999" at the annual Senior Follies. On February 28-29, 85 talented members of the senior class performed a series of humorous skits and musical acts, impressing the audience with their renditions of the past four years.

Each skit was introduced with a clever opening by the emcees. While National Honor Society/Beta Club and SOS stayed with the tradition of poking fun at the faculty and funny events at South, other groups used Follies as an opportunity to point out the imperfections of fellow classmates. The Senior Men (or should we say women) found their feminine sides when they imitated the ladies giving speeches. However, the Senior Women retaliated by dressing and acting like the guys at a typical party. Executive Council and Key Club acted out how they see themselves in the future.

The musical acts were some of the most memorable acts of the evening. Popular songs of today were performed by soloists, and Martial Arts surprised the adult crowd with their own song. And who can forget the dancers? The Lettergirls turned out to be Letterguys, Riverdance came to South, and the ladies definitely loved Cherah!

A lot of hard work and late rehearsals paid off and made this year's show very successful. It was a night of memories, and, quoting from Sarah Snyder's slide show song, we will all "Remember That."

## Two students receive prestigious scholarships

By Megan McKnight  
Centerspread Editor

Two South Meck students received prestigious scholarships this month. Seniors Andrew Buchert and Eric Olshan were awarded sister scholarships to North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, respectively.

Buchert was awarded the John T. Caldwell Alumni Scholarship to N.C. State, which gives \$4,000 a year for four years. He also receives a \$1500 stipend for a "personal development experience" to further develop a particular field of interest or study. The money can be used for anything the recipient desires, re-

gardless of whether it applies to his major. Buchert tentatively plans to use the money to study for a summer in England at Oxford University.

Buchert and one other student from Charlotte were chosen from a field of forty-two finalists from around the nation. A total of twenty-six scholarships were awarded.

Olshan received the Cameron Morrison scholarship to UNC Chapel Hill. He will be awarded \$5,000 a year for four years. The scholarship is academic based and is not applied for. Only students from Richmond and Mecklenburg counties are eligible, and the scholarship is awarded to only five students from these two counties.



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

Seniors Jenny Martelle and Scott Wilson were chosen to represent South in the 27th annual Phil Hughston Award competition. Every Charlotte-Mecklenburg high school can nominate one male and one female candidate. From the candidates, two winners will be chosen in May.

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## Society's abuse of the elderly cannot be tolerated

Economic and technological advancement have caused the neglect one of a valuable groups: the elderly.

By Natalie Smith  
Staff Reporter

America is the most sophisticated nation in the world. Unfortunately, our economic and technological advancement have caused the nation to neglect one of our most valuable groups in society: the elderly. In other countries, the elderly are revered as family patriarchs and bastions of wisdom. In the United States, we tend to neglect our senior citizens and cast them off to the side as soon as they begin manifesting signs of aging. They are regarded as burdens or nuisances and are treated accordingly. At a time in life when they need more assistance and support than ever, the elderly are often forced to contend with social and economic biases against them. The situation is quite regrettable because given the opportunity, older adults have much to contribute, not only to us as

individuals, but to society as a whole.

Many people fail to recognize the value of the elderly. They hold the ignorant opinion that because an older person is physically less able or is no longer economically productive, he is worthless. These sentiments are essentially a form of discrimination. Most people would not dismiss the handicapped as worthless because they are generally less active than others. Likewise, most people would not openly scorn a person who is unable to work because of health complications. A person's worth depends upon far more than physical stamina and monetary output. Society should keep this in mind in our dealings with the elderly.

The increasing lack of tolerance for the elderly is seen in the growing number of senior citizens being put into nursing homes. While there is nothing at all wrong with placing an elderly

relative into one of these facilities, one must realize that many times they are substandard and are places where abuse and neglect prevail. Consequently, elderly adults living in these establishments are left helpless and at the mercy of uncompassionate "caregivers".

Sadly, older adults are many times also the victims of medical professionals who make little or no effort to save their lives. Some doctors feel, essentially, that it simply is not worth it. Therefore, in yet another way, the well-being of senior citizens is put in danger.

Even older adults who do not face such dire circumstances and can care for themselves must deal with economic pressures and the uncertainty of their financial security. For example, because of the drastic increase in the number of people within the elderly population, there has been recent speculation that Medicare benefits will have to be

eliminated. Whether or not one supports discontinuation of Social Security is not the issue. The point is that if Medicare is done away with, older adults will have once again suffered at the hands of society.

While most of us have little to do with the major decisions affecting the elderly population, there is something all of us can do to make the burden of older adults a bit easier to bear. Empathize. Be patient. Realize that senior citizens are not worthless citizens. They are valuable components of our society. Even if they are not as active or productive as they once were, we should appreciate them for their earlier accomplishments in life. Often, having lived full and active lives, older adults have untold wisdom and experiences to share. By throwing them away, we miss out on a lot. By listening to our senior citizens we can learn much about their fascinating lives and ourselves.

## Cuts in arts funding detrimental to all

By Jennifer Samuels  
Staff Reporter

Recently, the Charlotte City Council overthrew a two-year policy that cut arts funding because of objections to gay themes and characters in current Charlotte theater productions. The decision marks a victory not only for the Charlotte theater community, but for artists everywhere. The issue of arts funding has always been prevalent, but perhaps never so much as it is now. The influx of sexuality-tinged plays and suggestive artwork has the conservatives who pay the taxes that fund the arts running scared.

To cut arts funding is to deny a community the right to develop a unique cultural environment. The arts help to create a sense of community among individuals who might otherwise never encounter each other. By arts I am referring to everything from visual arts to performing arts; from sculptures to symphonies. One of Charlotte's most recent goals has been to become a "world-class" city, ranking with the likes of Boston, New York City, and most notably, Atlanta. Unfortunately, all three of these cities have something that Charlotte will have difficulty achieving: a rich artists community that nurtures its members rather than censor them. For instance, the recent controversy in Charlotte was largely a result of the Charlotte Repertory Theatre's production of *Angels in America*. This controversial show featured characters with AIDS, homosexual themes, and a brief scene containing male frontal nudity. By desiring to share this Pulitzer-Prize winning play with the community the entire city was punished. Funding by the Mecklenburg Arts and Science Council was eventually cut as a

result of this. Artists were scared away from expressing their views and opinions for fear of being penalized. Most recently, the Actor's Theatre of Charlotte twice put off producing the play *Dream of a Common Language* because of its nude scene. Despite their First Amendment rights, the Actor's Theatre feared losing city council funding for the theater and others across the country.

The issue of cutting arts funding does not only apply to public art. The controversy over arts in school has been raging for years. Many city councils across the country feel that programs such as drama, band/orchestra, and art are less important than the traditional core subjects of math, science, English, and social studies. They could not be more wrong. There have been many studies proving that there is a direct link between participation in the arts and performance in school. One uses a large portion of the brain in playing a musical instrument; thus, his mental ability is sharpened and his performance in school improved. There is a direct link between high SAT scores and time spent studying the arts. Participation in the arts also increases self-esteem. Knowing that you are good at something, or at least are trying your hardest at something you love provides the individual with a sense of worth and value.

"Studying the arts makes the difference between existing and living". So many lives can be enriched by participation in the arts. There is a reason art is often used as a form of therapy. The desire to create and be a part of the artistic creations has always been a part of human nature. To censor the arts in cities and schools is denying the community part of its heritage; it is limiting their minds.

## Quick Take on Opinions

### Keep school assignments the old-fashioned way: integrated

Even though there are disadvantages to busing, let's not lose sight of the many advantages it has for students in Charlotte Mecklenburg schools. Of course I do not like the idea of having to take two thirty minute bus rides to school everyday. But when I realize how well our school is kept and how modernized the equipment is, I know that if I attended the school in my neighborhood, I would not receive the same advantages. I am certain this would hinder my learning.

Unfortunately, we live in a society in which there has to be an issue such as this. Sometimes it can be beneficial to give a little, get a little. Sure the long rides to school can be bothersome, but busing is very necessary in Charlotte at this time to keep our schools diverse.

Sharon Osborne

*The Echo*

David W. Butler High School  
Matthews, NC

### Quality education: A rising problem

How are we supposed to make better grades and get higher test scores if we are not being taught effectively?

Well, being an energetic teacher is a start. Students will want to learn if a teacher looks involved with his or her class. The teachers that make learning fun have the students that benefit with better grades and higher test scores.

However, the teachers that just lecture and talk the whole period bore us to death. These types of teachers don't take the time to stop and think if the students are actually understanding what they are teaching.

Nikki Pistolis

*The Olympic Flame*

Olympic High School  
Charlotte, NC

### Fashion police in desperate need on school campus

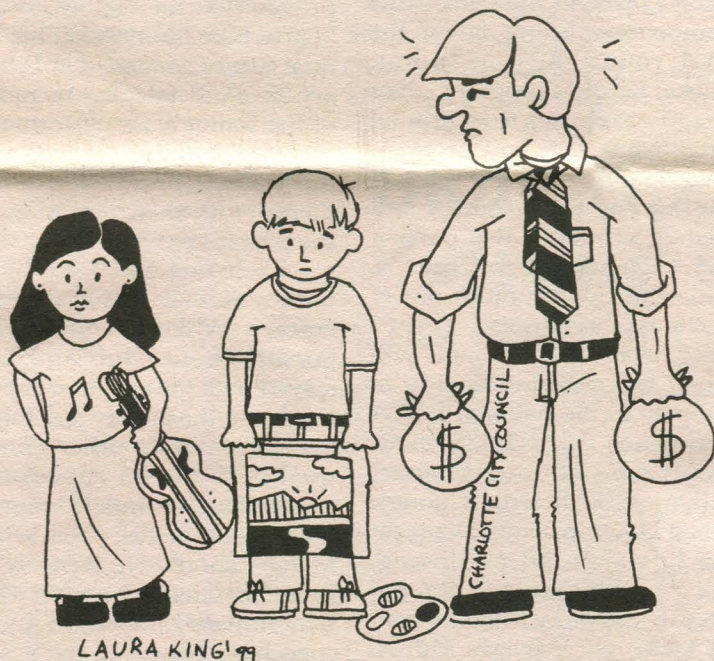
Some people come to school in the most awful clothing; girls coming to school in the shortest skirts they can get away with, and shirts that are so tight they reveal everything. Guys just come to school in a pair of jeans and a shirt, but some of the pants they wear are so big that you could fit about eight or nine people in one pant's leg.

People do not really need to bring back the seventies or wear polyester, but they do, and it looks bad. Polyester did not look good then, and it doesn't now.

Amber Kuney

*The Cardinal*

Jacksonville High School  
Jacksonville, NC



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## South Mecklenburg Prom '99

April 24, 1999  
8:00 - 12:00

### An Evening of Elegance

Hilton Charlotte  
Executive Park

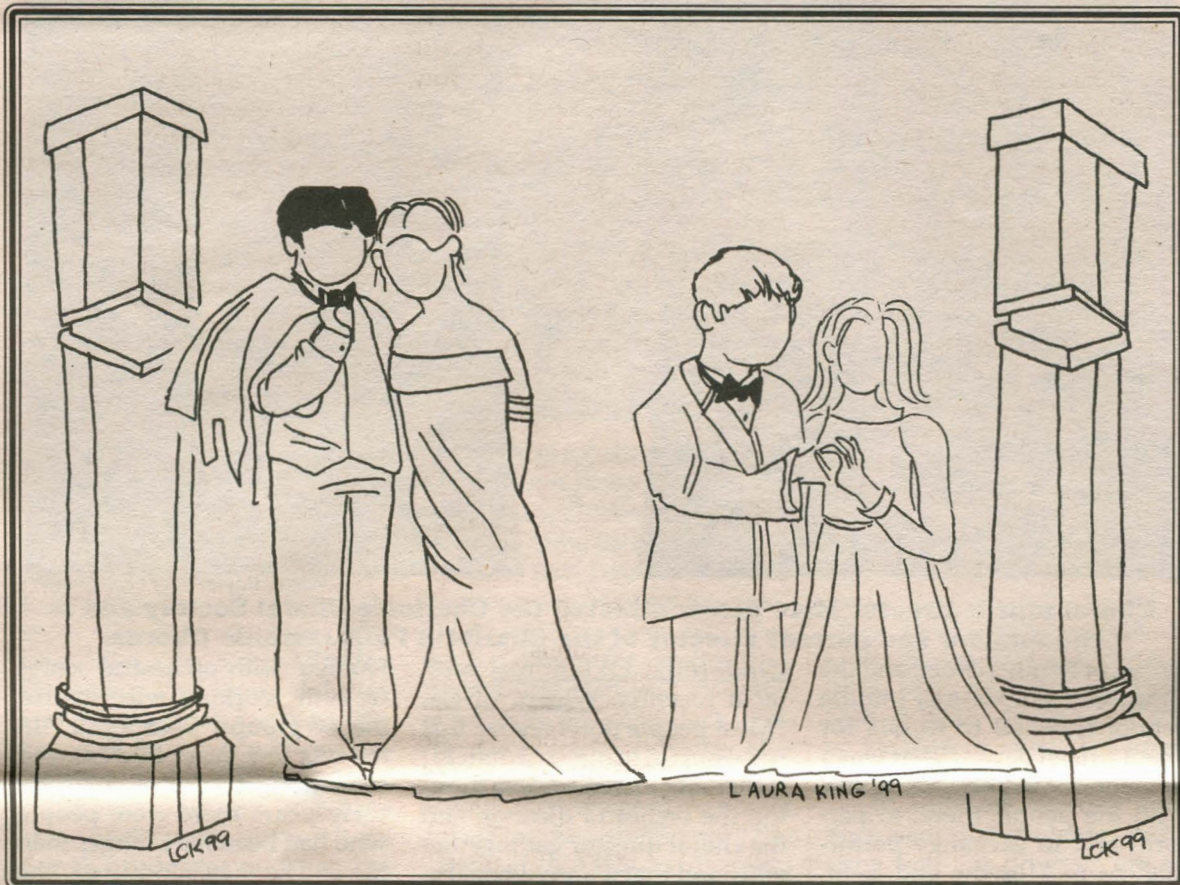
Layout by Nicole Ewing and Megan McKnight

#### Girls

##### pamper...

After stressing throughout the month of March (or even earlier) to find the perfect dress and date, the magical day finally arrives. Here's what the female population has to go through in order to transform into Cinderella for a night.

After awakening to a light breakfast, South ladies spend the morning picking up last minute necessities (panty hose, boutonniere, travel size makeup items, etc.), and then continue on to their hair/nail/makeup appointments, which last until around 4:00. They come home and talk with friends over the phone about the night ahead, realizing their date will arrive in half an hour. Girls rush around touching up hair and makeup until the doorbell rings and it is time to make a grand entrance into the foyer to be greeted by a speechless date. Moms act as the family photographer as the couple poses for hundreds of pictures. The two proceed to dinner and the dance. Hopefully, all of the work was worth it!



#### Guys procrastinate

Unlike the female population, guys tend to treat prom as just another date, except that they get to dress up like a penguin. Sure, guys are excited, but they know that they are there to please their dates and make it a memorable evening for the ladies.

Sabre men will most likely wake up late and enjoy a breakfast of eggs, bacon, hash browns, the works. Luckily, Mom has already picked up the tuxedo and corsage, so they can spend the day outside playing ball or watching ESPN. After debating on whether or not to take a shower, hopefully the guy will decide to take one a half-hour before he has to leave. The tux takes all of one minute to put on, and after a quick look in the mirror, he comments to himself, "I look good." A quick goodbye to mom and dad, and he is off to pick up his date. He arrives right on time to pose for pictures. As the couple pulls away he wonders, "What's the big deal? That was easy!"

## I Went to a Party, Mom

I went to a party Mom,  
I remember what you said,  
You told me not to drink  
Mom,  
So I drank soda instead.

I felt really good inside, Mom  
The way you said I would,  
I didn't drink and drive,  
Mom,  
Though others said I should.

I know I did the right thing  
Mom,  
I know you're always right.  
Now the party is over,  
As everyone drives out of  
sight.

As I hop into my car, Mom,  
I know I'd get home in one  
piece,  
Because of the way you raised  
me Mom,  
As responsible and sweet.

I started to drive away, Mom,  
I pulled onto the road,  
The other car didn't see me,  
Mom,  
It hit me like a toad.

As I lay here on the  
pavement, Mom,  
I hear the policeman say,  
The other guy was drunk,  
Mom,  
And now I'm the one who has  
to pay.

There is blood all around me Mom,  
And most of it is mine,  
I hear the paramedic say,  
I'll die in a very short time.

I'm lying here dying, Mom,  
I wish you could get here soon,  
How come this happened to me,  
Mom?  
My life burst like a balloon.

I just wanted to tell you, Mom,  
I swear I didn't drink,  
It was the others, Mom,  
The others didn't think.

He probably didn't know where he  
was going, Mom,  
He was probably at the same party  
as mine,  
the only difference is, Mom,  
He drank and I will die.

Why do people drink, Mom?  
It can ruin your life,  
I'm feeling sharp pains now, Mom  
Pains just like a knife.

The guy who hit me is walking,  
Mom,  
And I don't think that's fair,  
I'm lying here dying, Mom,  
While all he can do is stare.

Tell sister and brother not to cry,  
Tell Daddy to be brave,  
And when I get to heaven, Mom,  
Write "Daddy's Girl" on my grave.

Someone should have told him,  
Mom,  
Not to drink and drive,  
If he had taken the time, Mom,  
I would still be alive.

When in need--you were always  
there,  
My breath is getting shorter,  
Please don't cry for me, Mom,  
I'm becoming very scared.

I have one more question, Mom,  
Before I say goodbye,  
I didn't drink and drive, Mom,  
So why am I to die?

This is the end, Mom,  
I wish I could look you in the  
eye,  
And say these final words to  
you, Mom,  
I love you and good-bye.

-Anonymous



The Sabres' Blade staff reminds you  
to be safe, and not drink and drive  
on prom night.

#### Where to eat

**Italian:**  
Bertolinni's  
Villa Antonio  
Manzetti's  
**Japanese:**  
Kabuto  
Nakato  
**Chinese:**  
P.F. Chang's  
Boading  
**Steakhouses:**  
Capital Grill  
Morton's of Chicago  
Palm Restaurant  
Alston's

#### Where to eat

**French:**  
La Bibliotheque  
Patou  
Silver Cricket  
Bistro 100  
Tower Club  
**American:**  
Lamplighter  
The Epicurean  
Pewter Rose  
The Park Hotel  
**Fondue:**  
The Melting Pot  
**Spanish:**  
Ole, Ole  
Don Quijote



## Teacher Spotlight: Choral director Marc Setzer has inspired thousands of students interested in the performing arts

Setzer has engineered a choral program that is envied by high schools and colleges throughout the state

By Andrew Buchert  
Editor

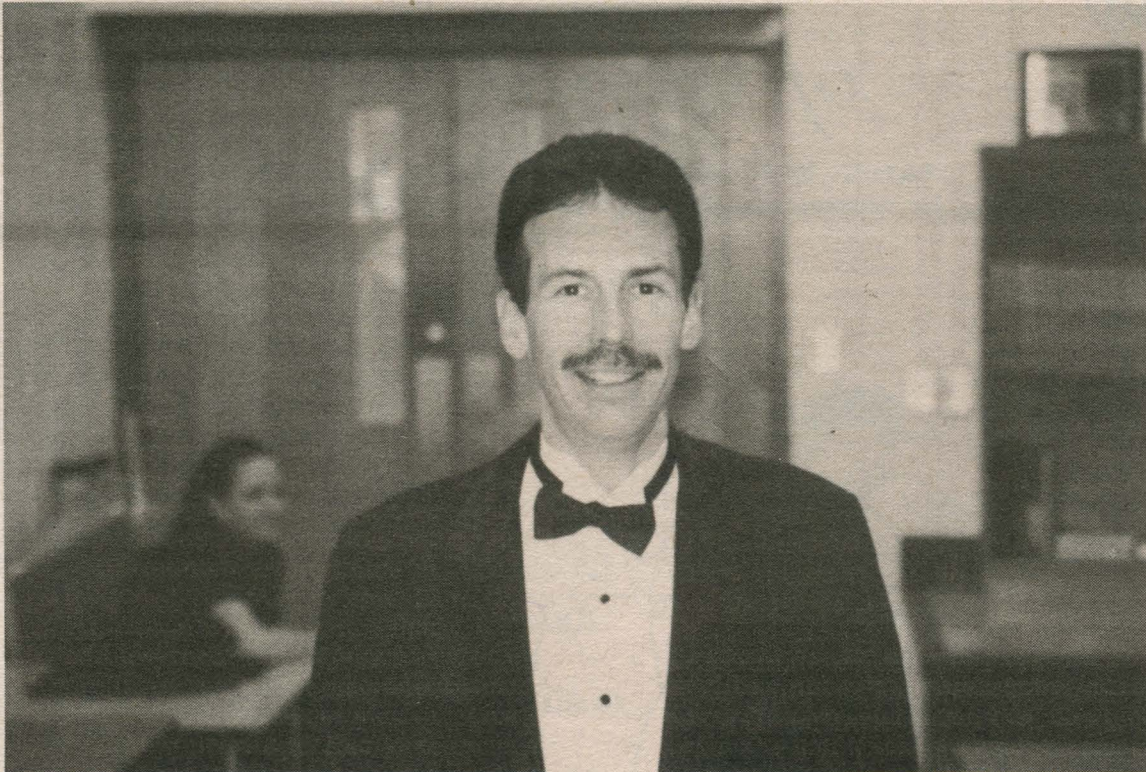
Choral music director Marc Setzer has been a familiar face around South Meck since he first began teaching in 1979. During his nearly twenty year tenure at South, Setzer has not only inspired thousands of students interested in the performing arts, but he has also engineered a choral program that is envied by colleges and universities throughout the state.

As the director of the choral music department, Setzer has been responsible for directing anywhere from four to six choirs, as well as teaching music theory classes, voice classes, and an introductory piano course. In addition, rehearsals for various competitions and contests, such as all-state, all-county, and honors chorus, and rehearsals for musicals are all held after school. "It's something you really have to enjoy doing, and you have to work really hard to prioritize what you need to do on a daily basis and then what happens with all the extra time that you have to put in," he said.

For more than twenty years, even before Setzer took over as choral music director at South, the program has had a long-running record of excellence. "At state contests, which are one of the ways of judging a program, our advanced ensembles have received numerous superiors, which are the highest rating," said Setzer.

Outside of the state, South's choral accomplishments range from performing at the Kennedy Center in a national competition to winning an international festival in Toronto twice. Setzer's advanced ensembles travel frequently, having performed in such cities as Orlando, Atlanta, Williamsburg, and New York.

In the early 1990s a combi-



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

**Choral music director Marc Setzer directed the Charlotte Choral Society and is the founder and current director of the Charlotte Philharmonic Chorus.**

nation of South's choirs and the choruses from Carmel Middle School traveled to Russia for about fifteen days. "That was a tremendous experience, to live with the people there, to perform and to exchange performances in Moscow and in St. Petersburg," said Setzer. "I have great memories from that trip."

Setzer is currently preparing the choruses for a co-trip with the band to California in April, in which the combined band and choir will actually do some studio recording work and observe what goes on at the highest level of the recording industry. "Disneyland is not only state-of-the-art, they define the art of the music industry," he said.

As far back as the early 1980s, the choral, band, and theater departments have teamed up to perform many well-known musicals, such as *Music Man*, *Anything Goes*,

*Cinderella*, *Oklahoma*, and, most recently, *Wizard of Oz*. "Most people don't realize that it's [performing a musical] something that the drama director, the orchestra director, and the choral director get together with, and that it's anywhere between 150 to 250 hours to put on a musical," said Setzer.

Setzer has been responsible for conducting the orchestra during South's musicals, whereas a lot of choral directors simply play the piano in the orchestra pit. The normal procedure is for the choral director to work with the vocalists and maybe help out with some of the staging. Because Setzer works so closely with the characters and the staging of the musical from the very beginning, it is often easier for him to conduct. However, he may begin alternating with the band director in the next few years. "Many choral directors aren't really that

familiar with orchestral scores or with working with instrumental groups," said Setzer. "In the last few years I've enjoyed conducting the shows, but in my early years there were people who had been here longer than me and so they conducted," he said.

Because both of Setzer's parents were violinists with the world-renowned Cleveland Orchestra, and because his older brother is an internationally known violinist, he grew up watching great conductors and listening to big choirs perform. However, he did not simply migrate into a career in music. When he went to college at Michigan in Ann Arbor, he began studying engineering to distance himself from music for a while. "I didn't know if music was something that I wanted to do, or if it was just something that I was supposed to do," he said.

Setzer did come back to music. He directed musical groups in college, worked as an assistant to some of the music professors, and both sang and co-directed several professional choirs in Ann Arbor. He completed his bachelors degree and his masters degree in conducting at Michigan. After graduating, he spent a summer in Aspen, Colorado studying in an advanced conducting course under a well-known conductor.

Eventually Setzer found his way to Charlotte while looking for a position with a college. "I was really happy to come to South Meck because it had a very good program, better than that of some small colleges," he said.

Several years ago the number of students participating in South's choral program topped 400. At that time, Setzer's wife, Terri, joined the faculty and they designed a program with six choirs, as well as piano classes, theory classes, and voice pedagogy classes. "Since no school had as many as six choirs, we had people coming in and looking at our program from all over, including colleges," said Setzer.

In the mid-1980s Setzer directed the Charlotte Choral Society, which is better known as the Singing Christmas Tree.

Setzer is the founder and current director of the Charlotte Philharmonic Chorus. When he was asked to form this group six years ago, he brought students from South and area churches together to sing with the Philharmonic Orchestra. "It went over so well that I was offered the opportunity to form an adult choir," said Setzer.

Setzer enjoys teaching most of all. "My high school choral program had a huge impact on me, and I wanted to be able to have some of that impact on my students," he said.

### Odyssey of Mind team wins prestigious award

South Mecklenburg's Odyssey of the Mind Team B won first place at a regional competition at UNC Charlotte on Saturday, March 13.

The team, composed of South freshmen Quinn Kirby, Bill Cleveland, and Daniel Schneider also includes students from Myers Park. They have been working together for several years and last year went to world-level competition at Disney World.

Their skit, "O, My Faire Shakespeare," won them the Ranatra Fusca Creativity Award, which is a highly prestigious award given for outstanding creativity. In addition to creating technical equipment, the team wrote an original script and musical score for their skit.



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## Auto Technology program recognized as leader in Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System

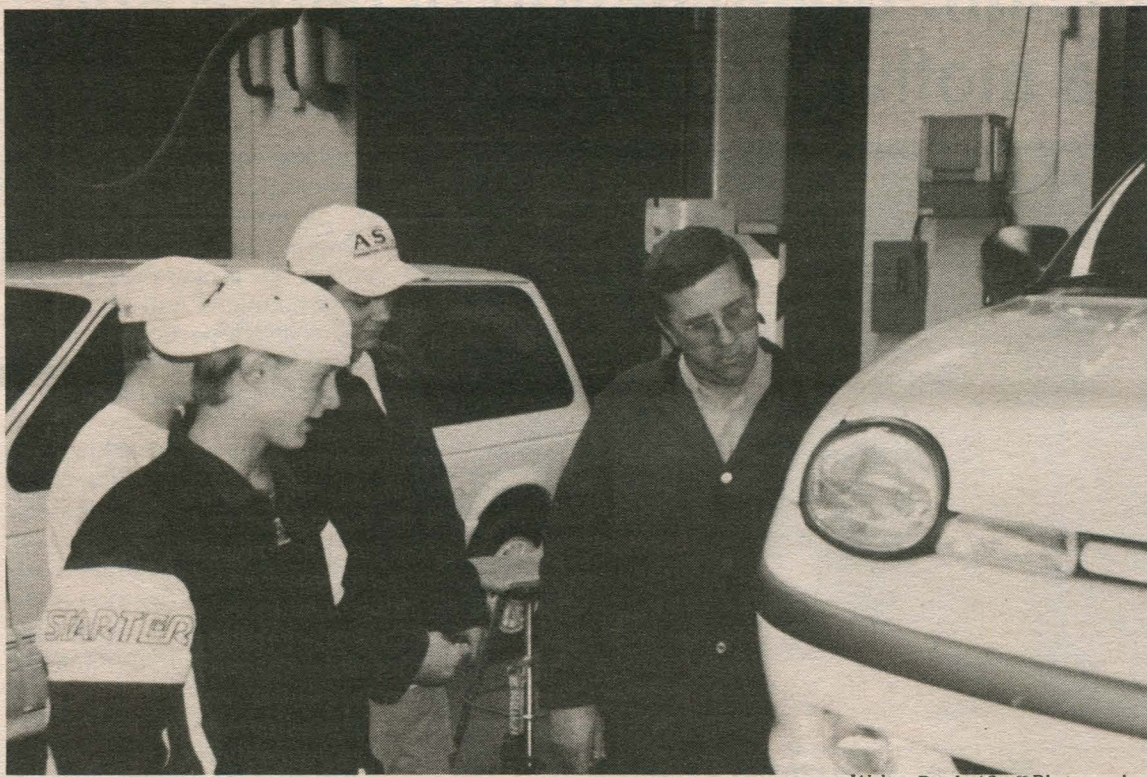
By J.T. Crook  
Sports Co-Editor

Since taking over South's Automotive Technology program three years ago, Doug Pressley has engineered and fine-tuned the curriculum to become the best Auto Tech program in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system. Pressley is currently working towards acquiring the National Automotive Technology Education Foundation (NATEF) certification for the program, which would enable students to receive college transfer credit after taking his classes.

Before Pressley took over the program, students had never taken Auto Tech classes seriously. Auto Tech was considered a filler class that did not require much effort. One of Pressley's major goals coming into South was to change that attitude. The program now has produced at least ten graduates who currently work in the automotive field, and this year there are potentially three students who will enter the field after graduation.

Pressley has worked to build a curriculum not only for future mechanics but also for people who simply enjoy cars. He teaches two levels of Automotive Technology. Auto I students learn the basics of car repair and maintenance, from changing tires, oil changes, and battery changes to cooling systems, transmission systems, brake repair and electrical systems. In Auto II students enter into more hands on repair. They perform maintenance and repair jobs for teachers and work on their own cars as well. The students are also taught tire repair, complete brake jobs, belt and hose jobs, water pump maintenance, and engine repair.

In the expansive Auto Tech



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

**Once Doug Pressley's Auto Tech program completes its NATEF certification, students will be able to receive college transfer after taking his classes.**

workshop, students work on cars donated by corporations for practice and application of knowledge learned in the classroom. The shop contains a 1997 Chevrolet van, a 1993 Dodge Caravan, a 1995 Plymouth Neon, and a 1994 Buick Century. Because all four cars were manufactured in the 1990's, they are computer controlled and have state-of-the-art equipment on which students can learn the new technology available in cars and the innovations made in computers in the automotive industry.

Pressley's work in the program over the past three years has been leading to NATEF certification for the school. NATEF certification ensures that students interested in entering the automotive industry can earn both high school and college credit when taking Auto Tech classes at South. This certifica-

tion also includes placing the school's name on a national list of Auto Tech curriculums that are recognized around the country as quality programs. This extra publicity for South's program could also lead to donations from car manufacturers. Most importantly, however, students can receive credit in any community college in the nation for taking classes at South. "Basically, it [NATEF certification] means that, nationally, we have met the criteria and are recognized as a quality program," said Pressley.

The NATEF certification process has many requirements. As the instructor, Pressley must be ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) certified in at least four different areas, including brakes, steering/suspension, engine performance, and engine repair. Pressley is already certified in six other areas and

needs only two more to become eligible. South's Auto Tech facilities must also measure up to a set standard in order to be certified. The workshop must have a minimum amount of floor space and a certain amount and type of tools. There must also be classroom space set apart from the workshop.

In addition, Pressley must document that students graduating from his program are actually working in the automotive field, in areas such as dealerships and repair garages. This also includes students who are in colleges and universities studying automotive engineering or automotive design.

The workshop must also meet required safety regulations and Pressley is required to teach safety as a part of his curriculum. Safety is taught in the first two weeks of Auto I classes and all students are given a test re-

quired by the state of North Carolina. In order to continue in the class, every student must make a perfect score on this exam. These scores must be kept in a file and documented for NATEF certification in order to prove that safety is a first priority in Pressley's curriculum.

Certification is also contingent upon an inspection conducted by NATEF. In this inspection everything in the workshop must fall under the preceding criteria in order to pass. Every program is given two opportunities to pass inspection, which is the final step in the certification process. "The only thing I lack are those two inspections, and I hope to have those completed in April," said Pressley. South will then be the first Auto Tech program in the county to receive this certification.

Because of the opportunity for students to earn college credit while taking Auto Tech classes at South, Pressley has realized the importance of establishing a relationship with Central Piedmont Community College. South's students tour the CPCC facilities twice a year in order to learn what opportunities exist for them after high school. Students are given tours of the engine and transmission labs and are shown the diesel engine shop where students learn about repair on eighteen-wheelers and heavy tractors. "Central Piedmont is really a good support for us," said Pressley.

Pressley would like to establish a firm foundation for the next teacher who replaces him when he retires. "When I get to the point of making that decision to retire, it will be a program where someone could come in behind me and expand rather than build from the ground up," he said.

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# Faces in the Crowd

## Shannon Hurleigh: Combination of dance and drama motivates a rising star

By Megan McKnight  
Centerspread Editor

It is hard to be busier than senior Shannon Hurleigh. Not only is she an expert dancer, but she is heavily involved in the theater, various clubs at South, and, of course, shopping.

Shannon has been dancing since she was four, and now dances with Dance Productions six nights a week. She has also performed in numerous shows at South, and most recently choreographed *The Wizard of Oz*. During the summers she has attended North Carolina Governor's School and the National High School Institute at Northwestern, both for dance. Dance is not her only passion, however. The stage is her other domain. She was in *Oklahoma* as a freshman, *Gold in the Hills* as a sophomore, and has written and directed her own play. She has also performed in the



Walter Boyle / Staff Photographer

**Name: Shannon Hurleigh**  
**Holiday: Christmas**  
**Dream Date: Prince William**  
**In CD Player: Jewel**  
**Favorite Food: Chocolate**

student-written plays of the Honors Drama classes.

Shannon doesn't slack off when it comes to school work, either. She is near the top of her class, taking AP and AG classes. She is also a participant in National Honor Society, Beta Club, Spanish Honor Society, DECA, and Somedra.

Shannon says that her mom is her inspiration because, "she's giving; she puts everyone else before herself. She has a passion for life that I admire." After high school, Shannon plans to study dance at Oklahoma City University. Following college, she hopes to perform in Disney World or on cruise ships. Eventually she would like to open her own dance studio in Charlotte.

The well rounded life that Shannon has carved out for herself has been accomplished through hard work and dedication to what she loves.

*Are neighborhood schools an appropriate alternative to the busing system?*

"We should be allowed to choose the school that we wish to attend. Race should not be an issue."

**Nicole DeFrance, 11<sup>th</sup>**

"We should not have neighborhood schools until an equal percentage of blacks and whites reside in a certain area."

**Chomeka McCormick, 10<sup>th</sup>**

"Neighborhood schools are a great solution. It is a proven fact that children are more comfortable learning in their own neighborhood."

**Meredith Perry, 12<sup>th</sup>**

"Students should have the privilege to choose which school they attend as long as they intend to graduate."

**Tamika Staten, 10<sup>th</sup>**

"Neighborhood schools are the only solution to apathetic communities. This could make a big difference by allowing children to be taught in their own neighborhood where they feel welcome."

**Julia Flumian, 11<sup>th</sup>**

"School assignment should be left alone. We should all just stay where we are currently assigned to attend school."

**Robert Coleman, 9<sup>th</sup>**

"We should definitely have neighborhood schools. The concept of busing across the county is ridiculous."

**Kevin Benfer, 10<sup>th</sup>**

"While neighborhood schools would make bus rides shorter, the children would not be exposed to as many different cultures."

**Brian Spaulding, 12<sup>th</sup>**

"Children should not be bused. Busing causes many disruptions in the lives of the students and upsets parents as well."

**Kristan Berry, 10<sup>th</sup>**

## Jay Lawrence: Hard working and easy-going student on the road to success

By Natalie Smith  
Staff Reporter

If one were asked to name the most likeable, most easy-going student at South, at the top of the list would be Jay Lawrence. Whether one knows him as a diligent student or as a skilled athlete, all acknowledge that Jay is a well-rounded person who commits himself to success.

During his years at South, Jay has been an active participant in several clubs and sports. He is currently a member of the NAACP and, in the past, he has been in Civitan. Jay is a valuable member of the football and wrestling teams, and he was also a member of the 1999 Reverse Homecoming Court. In his free time Jay enjoys spending time with friends and going to the movies.

Jay doesn't waste all of his time on fun and recreation,



Walter Boyle / Staff Photographer

**Name: Jay Lawrence**  
**Movie: Half Baked**  
**Food: Sesame Chicken**  
**In CD Player: Eminem**  
**Book: Huckleberry Finn**

though. He knows the importance of academics, shown by his course load and grades. Jay maintains excellent grades, despite being enrolled in such challenging AG and AP classes as Physics and Psychology. His scholastic success has not gone unnoticed by the community. Jay has been nominated as a Top Senior by one of Charlotte's notable newspapers, *The Charlotte Post*. On the national level, Jay has been named one of Who's Who Among America's High School Students.

So where does this intelligent Sabre plan to attend college? Jay is not yet sure of what college he plans to attend, although he has been accepted by several schools. He plans to study law or political science.

Jay sums up his formula for success and offers it as advice to fellow students: "Work hard now because it will make it much easier later in life."



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## Life of a hero: Joe DiMaggio 1914-1999

I believe that Joe DiMaggio was the greatest baseball player of all time. He holds the unattainable record of hitting safely in fifty-six consecutive games in 1941. His lifetime batting average was .325. He was an all-star in every year he played professional baseball and was the league's Most Valuable Player three times. But he was more than just a baseball player. DiMaggio had more than just great numbers during his career. He had grace and dignity that will leave a legacy for others to follow.

Joe DiMaggio's fame transcended his sport. His celebrity status was recognized even by people who are not baseball fans. He was well-known for his talent but was admired for the way he conducted himself. DiMaggio played effortlessly and was skillful in all aspects of the game. He made playing centerfield look easy. Many people who saw him play insist that Joe DiMaggio never made a hard catch. He never had to dive or crash into a wall but he was always in place when the ball got there.

Joe DiMaggio was never flashy. He never lived the high-life that is so expected of profes-

## South begins season ranked #1 Great pitching and hitting lead the Sabres

By J.T. Crook  
Sports Co-Editor

South's baseball team this year is looking to complete something spectacular. They are talented and confident enough to believe that they will win the state championship this season. Coach Bagwell is returning eight starters from a team that last year reached the state quarterfinals. His leaders on the field will be Corey Wood, Deron Chase and Craig Withrow.

It is well known that the most important part of a good baseball team is good pitching. South this year has an outstanding pitcher to lead the pitching staff. That player is Corey Wood, who was the Sabre's number two pitcher last year. Corey won the Southwestern 4A tournament MVP last season by pitching a three-hitter against Providence in the title game. In a recent game against Providence, he only allowed five hits and had seven strikeouts to lead the Sabres to a 4-3 win.

After pitching, South has two great hitters to lead the offense. Deron Chase was the power batter for the Sabres last year by hitting 8 home runs and 34 runs-batted-in. His power



Matt Lockrem delivers a pitch during the Sabres win against Independence at home Friday March, 19.

will be well complemented by senior Craig Withrow. Craig batted over .400 last year and still looks to improve on that number for this year.

Even with all of the talent on the team, South is still held together by Coach Bagwell. He has let the Sabres know that they have the potential to win the state championship and expects them to practice with an intensity to match their talent. "I certainly let them know that we

aren't going to practice to be an average team," said Bagwell. "We are going to practice to exceed our ability and to play competitive baseball."

With the talent available to this team and the coaching provided by Bagwell, South should expect to hang another state championship banner next to the 1989 championship in the gym. After starting 4-0 for the season the Sabres are on their way to matching their potential.

## March Madness: "It's Spreading"

Welcome back March Madness! It is now spring again, a time of love, nice weather, and basketball. All throughout the month of March, the NCAA college basketball tournament takes place. It has to be the best time of the year for any sports fan.

For the last three weeks or so, college basketball has been on TV nonstop. As soon as school was over, any and every student who enjoys basketball hurried home and watched the tournament. Whether it was the first and sixteenth seed playing or the eighth and ninth seed, it was guaranteed to be an exciting and emotional game.

Emotions. In college basketball, players are not playing the sport because they love to make money. They are playing to earn the utmost respect in the nation as well as the emotional rush which occurs when the teams cut down the nets. This is the major reason why college basketball is better than the NBA. The NBA players are playing for money, but if they lose consistently every year, they still are paid. It is very rare that you will

Nathan Morabito  
Sports  
Commentary

ever see an athlete from the National Basketball Association cry after losing a playoff game. During the NCAA tournament, it is not unusual to see either tears of joy or tears of pain after winning or losing in the first round.

The 1999 NCAA tournament has been one of the most exciting and most unpredictable tournaments this decade. Early exits were made by teams who were predicted to be four of the teams left at the National Semifinals. Four of these teams, including UNC Chapel Hill, Arizona, Miami, and Stanford were unable to make it past the first two rounds. With upsets also come Cinderella teams. This year Gonzaga, Oklahoma, and Miami (Ohio), were major Cinderella teams. When teams from smaller conferences beat ranked teams, the celebration is one of the best things to watch.

The Final Four and the NCAA championship just finished on Monday, March 29, and even if you are not a basketball fan, you most likely enjoyed these games. Not only were they exciting, but they also made the fans feel good that some of our nation's athletes are playing for the love of the game of basketball.

Editor's Note: This article was written prior to the 1999 NCAA tournament. The views shared are the writer's and not necessarily the views shared by the rest of the Sabres' Blade staff.

J. T. Crook  
Sports  
Commentary

sional athletes. DiMaggio chased down balls in the outfield and ran hard to every base, even in unimportant games. When asked why he devoted himself so completely to every game he answered that "there might be someone in the stands who has never seen me play before and I don't want to disappoint them."

Even after he retired, DiMaggio remained a cultural icon. His ability and demeanor endeared him to an entire generation. He always symbolized what was right in the world of sports and professional athletes. He was remembered in the Simon and Garfunkel song "Mrs. Robinson" in the famous line "Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio, our nation turns its lonely eyes to you." Simon explained the line by saying that in the 1960's (when the song was written) our nation had no heroes and that the youth of America needed someone to look up to that was as good as Joe DiMaggio.

Ron Fimrite wrote "It is said we are a people who need heroes. Joe DiMaggio did his best to fill that daunting role, first as the superb player he was, then as someone who kept alive his own legacy." Joe DiMaggio will live forever, not only for his career in baseball, but as a hero.

Editor's Note: All factual information for this article was taken from Sports Illustrated. Ron Fimrite is a columnist for that same magazine.

## Sabre soccer shows outstanding potential for '99 season

By Laura King  
Staff Reporter

The women's varsity soccer team here at South boasts outstanding potential for the 1999 spring season, as they claim the ninth spot in the Charlotte Observer's preseason Sweet Sixteen. They began the season with a 3-3 draw against last year's 3A state champions High Point Central, and proceeded to win their next three games with convincing scores of 3-0, 3-0, and 6-0. Junior Emma Juncadella and senior Karen VanRuitenbeck combined for the three shutouts, and allowed South's opponents an average of just 0.75 goals per game thus far. Their performance was assisted

by senior Sheila Findall's outstanding defense at the sweeper position.

The Sabres look impressive at every position this year, as several attacking players have made numerous goals and assists. Grace Pittman, Terry Fisher, and exchange student Mehta Skorstad are several strong additions to the varsity squad this year, as well as significant improvements in returning players including Emma Juncadella, Laura King and Sheila Findall. Senior Jennifer Martelle adds talent at the center midfield position after sitting out her junior year with a knee injury, and junior Allison Maul also adds depth to the midfield. In addition, South's roster includes three 1998 All-

Conference performances in seniors Hadley Trotter, Monique Pittman and Heather Sakaduski.

The Sabres feel that because of their depth and talent, a conference championship is a very attainable goal this spring. They will be competing for a spot in the state playoffs with major conference rivals East Meck, Myers Park and Providence, all three of which are ranked in the Sweet Sixteen. They proved that they really were contenders by beating number one ranked Charlotte Catholic Cougars by a score of 3-2 on March 18. The Sabres scored in the last three minutes on a cornerkick goal by Jennifer Martelle. South Meck's next home game will be played on April 1 against the Independence Patriots.

## Race raises money for scholarship fund in memory of Ben Robinette

By Jason Nark  
Staff Reporter

One week before what would have been Ben Robinette's fifteenth birthday, nearly 1,300 runners and non-runners alike gathered in Park Crossing on Saturday March 6 to run in a 5k race in Ben's memory, or if they chose, the one mile fun run. Participants donated money to fund a scholarship in his honor. The Ben Robinette Scholarship will be awarded annually to a Charlotte-Mecklenburg high school senior who possesses the academic and athletic talent that

Ben demonstrated.

South Mecklenburg was well represented at the race as the entire track team, as well as the entire Cross Country team and many friends came to show their support for the race for Ben. Freshmen Derek Smit and Jason Nark took first and second place respectively in the 14 and under age group, while Senior Kate Meier finished first in her division (15-19). Races of this type rarely attract many runners under the age of nineteen. However, the "This One's for Ben" race drew over 500 participants from this age group alone.

Race organizers began planning for this event in early Oc-

tober, setting a goal of \$25,000. They only expected 700 runners to register, by late Friday, 900 had already pre-registered. All proceeds that were generated from the race went to the Ben Robinette scholarship fund. Donations from the race, totaling \$44,500, increased the fund to \$70,000.

A Ben Robinette golf tournament will be held at Renaissance Golf Park on May 1 in hopes of reaching the \$100,000 scholarship goal. A Charlotte Mecklenburg senior will be selected annually to receive the scholarship. The scholarship committee is currently discussing the details for the award.



## Band Program demonstrates importance of arts education

By Jennifer Samuels and Natalie Smith  
Staff Reporters

On March 22, 1999, the South Mecklenburg Wind Ensemble performed for select school officials and administrators as part of a demonstration that focused on the importance of music in schools. The purpose of the presentation was to convince the attendees of the importance of music as part of a complete educational curriculum.

The South Mecklenburg Wind Ensemble was chosen to perform because its director, David Ragsdale, heads a research committee dedicated to proving a link between music/arts education and academic performance in school. Currently, the committee is focused on music, but it plans to expand its studies to include drama and visual arts at a later date.

There have been many studies, not just by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg committee, that have found concrete evidence of the link between music and intelligence. Recently, Howard Gardner's *Frames of Mind* reached the conclusion that musical intelligence was one of the seven human intelligences. He suggested that, if pursued early, a musical intelligence could be achieved by anyone. Noteworthy data also includes the fact that there is a direct correlation between improved SAT scores and the amount of time spent studying and performing in the arts. Scores have increased as much as one hundred points. In addition, Ragsdale comments that music is one of the few activities that utilizes both sides of the brain simultaneously.

This is only the latest in a long line of accomplishments for South Meck's bands. Over the years the band has received many excellent and superior ratings in both concert and marching band competitions. On Thursday, March 25th, the South Meck Freshman Band and Wind Ensemble went to Contest again in Shelby.

Another source of Sabre pride for the band program is the Marching Sabre Regiment. This year, for the first time, the marching band had over 200 members. A colorguard team that twirls flags and the Lettergirl Squad also fall under the category of marching band.

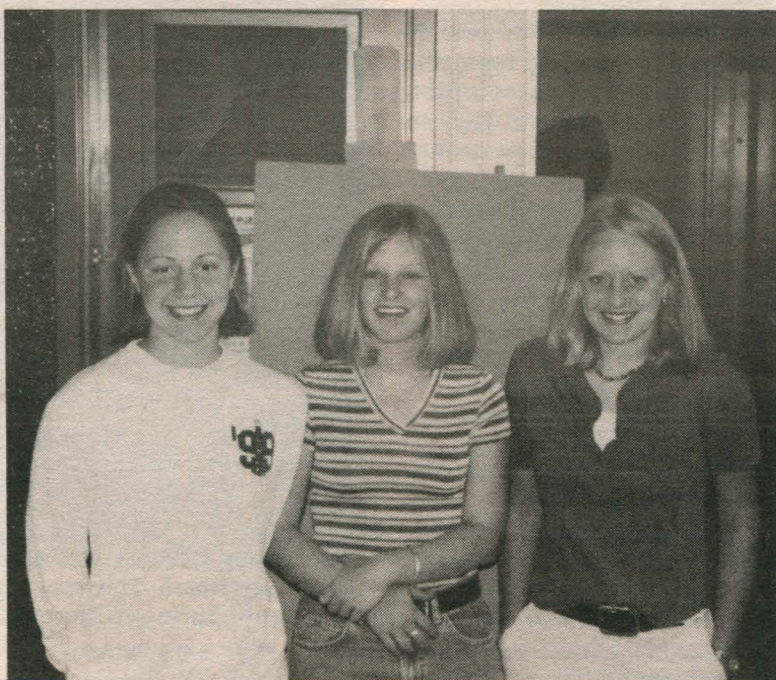
Band is a subject that encompasses many different skills and talents. If funding is cut for it, and all other arts programs, a great loss will occur. Much potential talent will be lost forever. When asked about the level of importance of keeping and expanding the role of music in the curriculum of schools, Ragsdale said, "If South wants to produce robots, then they should eliminate the arts. If South wants to produce human beings, then they should weigh the arts with the same importance as core subjects."

## Art Department carries on the tradition of success at the Scholastic Art Awards

By Laura King  
Staff Reporter

The Scholastic Art Awards are the premier award for middle and high school students around the nation. The purpose of the contest is to identify young artists with outstanding talent and potential, and to provide them with the opportunity to display their art. It was founded in 1923 by Maurice R. Robinson when he recognized that young artists were not being acknowledged nearly as much as their athletic classmates. Nearly eighty years later, the Scholastic Art Awards have become the largest and longest running awards program in the country. More than 250,000 works of art are judged each year; 50,000 artists are annually recognized on the local level, and over 1,100 on the national level.

In order to enter the Scholastic Art Awards competition, an artist's work must be recommended by an art teacher. Each teacher in Mecklenburg County schools is allowed just twenty-five entries. Judging the entries is no simple task, since 2,700 pieces are submitted locally and over \$10,000 in com-



Walter Boyle / Staff Photographer

**Hadley Trotter, Quinn Marvin, and Laura King received Silver Key recognitions at The Scholastic Art Awards.**

munity awards are presented. The artists' work is judged according to originality, technical skill and style.

The top five pieces in the contest are named American Visions nominees, which are then entered in the National Scholastic Art Awards competition in New York. From there, a district winner is selected as a fi-

nalist to compete for a prestigious national award. Along with the American Visions nominees, 100 Gold Key awards, 254 Silver Key awards, and 150 honorable mentions are selected.

The art department here at South boasts a long tradition of artistic excellence. In previous years, South has claimed a large

percentage of art honors in various contests, including Scholastics. South Meck artists dominate the race for slots in prestigious institutions such as the North Carolina State School of Design. This top-rated five-year program accepts only 81 applicants a year, and several South Meck seniors were accepted. Numerous South Meck artists were honored in this year's competition. Jesse Rademacher received one of the prestigious American Visions nominations. He also took home a Gold Key and a special community award. Hadley Trotter received two Gold Keys. Kate Meier and Cheri Hand each won two Silver Keys; in addition, Sarah Laster, John Edwards, Rachel Schultz, Laura King, Hadley Trotter, and Quinn Marvin received Silver Key awards. Community award winners from South included Kate Meier, Hadley Trotter, and Jason French. These winners were honored in a ceremony held at the West Mecklenburg auditorium on the afternoon of February 14. Their work is on display in the Charlotte Douglas International Airport until March 30, with the exception of pieces advancing to the national level.

## Band Spotlight: Fik reflects a strong Christian influence

This student band exhibits talent and experience

By Laura King  
Staff Reporter

Fik is a talented Christian band that includes several musicians here at South. Senior Kevin Deshields is the lead vocalist as well as rhythm guitarist, and sophomore Kevin Markie plays the drums. Stephen Morrison, a sophomore at Central Cabarrus, is the lead guitarist and also a vocalist. Katie Bischoff, a sophomore at East Meck, is also a vocalist, and David Tolentino, a senior at East, plays drums and turn tables. Last, but not least, is Chris Thompson, a senior at East, who plays bass guitar. Fik was formed approximately three years ago by David, Stephen and Kevin Deshields.

According to Kevin Deshields, the band's name sprang from a Christian influence on all of the members. "Being a 'Christian' band, we wanted a title that had some sort of meaning. The Bible refers to us as sheep, one of the world's dumbest animals. 'Fik' is a British slang term for 'uneducated.'" The band's music is influenced by several styles; they are a praise band and fit into the emo-rock category. Kevin Deshields also adds that Fik writes their own music.

Fik has a lot of experience. They perform in a variety of places including local youth groups and coffee shops, and have even played in England. Even though they love playing



at coffee shops like Joshua's Java and Rock'n Java, they all agree that playing in England was a great experience. Future performances include an appearance at Rock 'n Java in March, and a return to England in June. In addition, Fik plays monthly for their youth group at the Central Church of God.

Fik hopes to have a tape out by the end of the school year. Kevin Deshield's dad also provides several connections in the music industry. Prospective labels for the band include Warner Al-

liance and Benson Records. For now though, Fik continues to focus on performing in coffee shops and churches and looks forward to their trip to England this summer.

In addition to being talented musicians, the members of Fik are close-knit and supportive of each other. Regarding Fik, lead vocalist Kevin Deshields remarks, "I love everyone in this band. They all have a unique love for God, and they are an encouragement to me daily."

## The Mint Museum adds spice to Uptown Charlotte

By Cat Traphagan  
Staff Reporter

Uptown Charlotte is quickly becoming a world-class city. The evidence lies in the recent completion of The Mint Museum of Craft and Design. The museum is located on North Tryon Street in a renovated building that once housed the department store Montaldos.

The Mint Museum of Craft and Design is home to magnificent pieces of pottery, delicate blown glass, and many other fine crafts. The permanent collection that the museum boasts of is *Currents in Craft*. This display was acquired through donations from various artist and craft organizations throughout the United States. The exhibit is located on the first of the three floors that make up the extensive museum.

The second floor of the museum presents the *Harvey Littleton Reflections, 1946-1994*. The exhibit will be displayed from January 10-July 4, 1999. This well known glass sculptor's collection was the inaugural exhibition of the museum. Littleton's response to the museum can be summed up as, "The most important contribution that the Mint Museum of Craft and Design will be making is validation."

*The museum hours are Tues.-Thurs. and Sat. 10am-7pm, Fri. 10am-9pm and Sun. noon-5pm. The museum is free every second Sunday of the month. Other rates are \$4.00-students, \$6.00 adults.*